

Reading Promoters' Training: New Service of Public Library - A Case Study of Pudong Library of China

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ABSTRACT

In order to make reading promotion more professional and qualified, some libraries and associations in China are training reading promoters. The Pudong Library of Shanghai is a typical case. This article summarizes the theory and the practice of reading promoter training, and discusses the operation offered by Pudong Library. It also concludes the achievements, innovations and the characteristics of the training, and further provides the developmental directions of the training. This article aims to introduce a new service that was undertaken by the Pudong Library, and considers how to make this practice more effective and well-developed.

KEYWORDS

Pudong Library, Reading Promoter, Reading Promoters' Training, Reading Promotion

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, nationwide reading has been a national strategy in China. Various kinds of reading promotion programs such as story-telling, book-reading and lecture-giving are organized by libraries and other academic institutions. Reading promotion events have great significance for the recommendation of excellent books and enhancing the public's willingness and reading skills (Fan, 2017). Reading Promoters who plan, organize and implement these reading promotion activities are also significant. In recent years, libraries in China pay more attention to the Reading Promoters' building qualifications and management, and therefore, the Reading Promoters' training comes about. The Shenzhen Children's Library was the first library to train Reading Promoters in 2012. Since 2015, the Library Society of China has offered the Reading Promoters' Training project. In the practice of Reading Promoters' Training, the Pudong Library of Shanghai is a typical and distinctive public library, to which Reading Promoter's Training has become a kind of new service; from Reading Promoters to libraries, and to reading promotion related organizations.

Pudong Library is a district library, and their new building was opened to the public in 2010, which is located on 88 Qiancheng Road, Shanghai. The Pudong Library is funded by the local government; therefore, it is not a branch of the Shanghai Library, but a member of the Shanghai Central Library.

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The Pudong Library provides user-oriented services and is open to all, which expresses the universal service of the public culture (Zhang, 2010) (Figure 1).

LITERATURE REVIEW

In 2012, the Shenzhen Library carried out the Reading Promoters' Training for the first time in China, but scholars have studied reading promotion for several years. The following contents are what the scholars are concerned about.

Reading Promotion

In the middle of the last century, people realized “for thousands of years the written word and for centuries the printed word have played a vital role in the preservation and transmission of knowledge” (Maheu, 1972). Then, 1972 was proclaimed as the International Book Year by UNESCO’s General Conference, and the year’s slogan was “Books for All”. In 1977, the Library of Congress Center for the Book, which also administered the Poetry and Literature Center, was established by public law. The center promoted books and libraries, literacy and reading, as well as poetry and literature. That is, promoting reading is the heart of the Center for the Book’s mission. To promote books means to improve the literacy of people, and this is especially important for children. Edmonds (1987) stated “the promotion of reading and a commitment to producing a literate population must be central to the provision of library service to children in the coming decade” (Edmonds, 1987). In 1995, UNESCO further proclaimed 23 April the annual World Book and Copyright Day. Then, more and more libraries launched reading programs to promote reading, and there is no doubt that reading promotion is an important service in public libraries through today.

Figure 1. Geographic location of Pudong Library



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